

Delaware Produce Farmers Encouraged To Attend Sessions On Proposed Rule Changes

DOVER, Del. (January 13, 2022) – The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a [proposed rule change](#) on December 6, 2021, to amend the agricultural water requirements of the Produce Safety Rule. In response to the proposed change, the Delaware Department of Agriculture and University of Delaware Cooperative Extension will host two outreach sessions on January 21, 2022, to engage farmers and other stakeholders.

The Produce Safety Rule was signed into law in 2011 as part of the FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act. FDA's proposed rule amends the pre-harvest agricultural water requirements for covered produce other than sprouts previously established in Subpart E of the Produce Safety Rule. In the proposed rule, previous pre-harvest water microbial quality criteria and testing requirements are proposed to be replaced with more flexible requirements for pre-harvest agricultural water assessments. These assessments are designed to be more feasible to implement across various agricultural systems.

The two sessions scheduled for January 21 in Delaware will detail the proposed changes to the rule. Producers and stakeholders will learn best practices to write and submit questions and public comments to the FDA and participate in open discussions. Anyone interested in attending a session must [register online at https://delawarewaterrulemeeting.eventbrite.com](https://delawarewaterrulemeeting.eventbrite.com).

FDA has initiated a public comment period on the proposed rule to close on April 5, 2022. For public comments to be officially considered, all comments must be spoken at one of

the FDA's public meetings or submitted in writing to Docket No. FDA-2021-N-0471 on [Regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov).

FDA is hosting two virtual public meetings to discuss the proposed changes and hear feedback. These meetings are scheduled for February 14 and February 25, 2022. Farmers and industry representatives are encouraged to attend. [Registration is required](#) to obtain the details and link to attend one of the dates offered by the FDA.

Farmers and stakeholders who have clarification questions about proposed changes to the rule should submit them to AgWater@fda.hhs.gov.

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